UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE
17th meeting
held on
Friday, 23 October 1992
at 3 p.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 17th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. ELARABY	(Egypt)
later:	Mr. SUH (Vice-Chairman)	(Republic of Korea)
later:	Mr. ELARABY (Chairman)	(Egypt)
later:	Mr. PATOKALLIO (Vice-Chairman)	(Finland)
later:	Mr. ELARABY (Chairman)	(Egypt)

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/47/PV.17
4 December 1992

ENGLISH

92-61592 2327V (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 to 65, 68 and 142; and 67 and 69 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ITEMS

Mr. JAAKSON (Estonia): On behalf of the Estonian delegation, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your well-deserved election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We anticipate that under your expert guidance this Committee will break new ground in the pursuit of true international security.

Fundamental changes have reduced the level of global tensions, allowing Estonia to restore its independence through peaceful means. Some members of this body had to endure armed struggle in order to emerge from the long, dark night of foreign occupation. We have learned that peace is a precious commodity, but also a precarious one; it cannot be secured through the good intentions of just one party to a potential conflict.

Many delegations have voiced their opposition to the arms race, nuclear proliferation and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Estonia welcomes these statements, and salutes the efforts that have been made on these vexing problems during the last 40 years. Since Estonia does not have such weapons, and has no desire to acquire them, it ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on 7 January 1992 and has joined the International Atomic Energy Agency. However, military nuclear reactors not under Estonian control are being operated on our territory. We have no way of certifying that these reactors meet internationally mandated safety standards.

(Mr. Jaakson, Estonia)

Estonia intends to ratify the chemical weapons Convention as soon as that Treaty is ready for signing. However, with 475 separate military compounds on Estonian territory, but not under Estonian control, we cannot guarantee that some do not still contain chemical weapons.

The primary emphasis of this Committee has been on the control of weapons of mass destruction. While these weapons have rarely been used, the world still faces an unacceptable level of deliberate killing and destruction. On the one hand, we may give credit to this Committee for the fact that this toll is not greater. On the other hand, we find that not enough attention has been directed to eliminating extensive stockpiles of conventional weapons. Consequently, the United Nations is being called upon to provide more peace-keeping operations than it can currently manage.

In some conflicts, such as those in Somalia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mozambique and some areas of the former Soviet Union, the driving forces behind the violence have been heavily armed bands of volunteers and mercenaries led by warlords with access to stockpiles of conventional weapons. Because these forces answer to no recognized authority, resolutions adopted by international bodies have a minimal effect on their behaviour. In most cases, weapons and food are supplied to these paramilitary forces by parties who hope to profit from the destruction they cause. Aggression continues in Bosnia and Herzegovina despite the eviction of Serbia and Montenegro from the seat formerly occupied by Yugoslavia. That action failed to slow down a war notable for numerous reports of atrocities against the civilian population.

Mechanisms must be found through which weapons and supplies can be denied to aggressors in such conflicts. It should be recognized that stockpiles of

(Mr. Jaakson, Estonia)

arms and ammunition do not last indefinitely. The United Nations should, by branding the arms suppliers as co-aggressors, take more resolute measures against those States and their citizens or State military contractors that provoke and prolong military conflicts. At the same time, the victims of such aggression must be allowed the means for self-defence.

On a more positive note, European security has been enhanced by the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, and by the Vienna Document 1992 on confidence- and security-building measures.

A recent regional development that is of great importance to our collective security is the newly established Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) Forum for Security Cooperation. At the Helsinki Summit in 1992 the participating States of the CSCE agreed that the CSCE is a regional organization as described in Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. With this declaration, the participating States reaffirmed their belief in the importance of the United Nations at this critical time for Europe and Asia, when the CSCE is no longer a purely European organization, but an intercontinental organization, with Caucasian as well as Central Asian nations participating. The participation of non-member countries from Africa and Asia over a long period reaffirms that the CSCE's scope extends beyond the borders of its member States. We welcome the increased interest of non-member States in the crises now affecting Europe, and we recognize that the CSCE's broad mandate on security-related matters should help to reduce the risk of armed conflict and allow for consultations prior to conflict.

The experience of recent months has shown that cooperation between the CSCE and the United Nations is growing steadily. The United Nations has asked the CSCE to provide assistance in taking control of heavy weapons in Bosnia

(Mr. Jaakson, Estonia)

and Herzegovina. At the same time, the CSCE is attempting to find solutions to the tragic conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, with the United Nations assuming a more secondary role. This division of duties and responsibilities has relieved the United Nations of additional burdens, while allowing for regional solutions to be found. However, a constant interchange of information and mutual reinforcement is required in order to send a strong signal to all parties that actions in violation of accepted norms of international law will be met with universal condemnation.

We are proud to sponsor a draft resolution introduced in the General Assembly that stresses the need for enhanced cooperation and coordination between the CSCE and the United Nations.

We are equally pleased that at the last Helsinki Summit Conference the CSCE recognized the threat to international peace and security posed by the presence of foreign troops in the Baltic States, and was able to achieve consensus on a declaration urging the States involved to conclude without delay agreements, including timetables, for the early and complete withdrawal of such troops. While we recognize that some of these troops have in fact been removed, we still do not have a firm schedule for their complete withdrawal.

During this century Estonia has been attacked twice from the West and three times from the East. The War of Independence of 1918-1920 was ended by the Peace Treaty of Tartu, wherein the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic renounced all rights in perpetuity over the Estonian people and territory. In 1924 the USSR sponsored an armed coup attempt that failed. In

(Mr. Jaakson, Estonia)

1939 Estonia fell victim to the Nazi-Soviet pact's cynical division of Eastern Europe into "spheres of interest" - the first step towards annexation and occupation by the Soviet Union.

Estonia has taken note of a report in the Financial Times that quoted General Grachev as defining all former Soviet possessions as lying within the Russian "sphere of interest", with a corresponding "right" to intervene militarily.

(Mr. Jaakson, Estonia)

More outright statements asserting that the Baltic States are "theirs" can be found in the Russian newspaper Komsomolskaya Pravda. Revanchist ambitions and the assertion of "spheres of influence" contribute neither to the security of Europe nor to that of the world at large. These were baleful developments at the time of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and they are equally disturbing today.

Such developments have prompted us to join our Baltic neighbours in sponsoring a draft resolution in the General Assembly calling for the withdrawal of foreign troops from the Baltic States. Through this draft resolution we hope to reinforce the agreement reached at the Helsinki meeting and alert all States to the the existence of a potential source of conflict that urgently needs to be resolved. The need for such a General Assembly resolution is painfully apparent. Early this week, newspaper headlines reported that the troop withdrawals from the Baltic States had been halted until housing could be found for the withdrawing troops. To accept such an excuse would be to accept an indefinite delay in the withdrawal of foreign troops from our soil.

Estonia places great hope in the forward-looking proposals of the Secretary-General contained in his "Agenda for Peace". We believe that preventive diplomacy is far preferable to all the other forms of engagement outlined in the "Agenda for Peace". Estonia hopes that peaceful negotiations leading to the complete restoration of our sovereignty will be supported by all Member States. From our point of view, the United Nations could assume an effective stabilizing role, to act as a counterweight against those political circles determined to restore the 1989-1991 status quo in this region.

(Mr. Jaakson, Estonia)

As a consequence of repeated attacks on our sovereignty and our recognition that no small State is militarily a match for a super-Power, the security of Estonia and of all small States lies primarily in multilateral or universal security guarantees. The founders of the United Nations believed that the Organization should fulfil this very function. Unfortunately, the United Nations has not lived up to its full potential in this area, but if it can put into effect the concepts elucidated in the Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Peace", significant progress can be made.

In conclusion, we should like to reiterate Estonia's support for those constructive proposals which help the maintenance of world peace and support Estonia's interest in participating in regional security forums. Given Estonia's turbulent history in this century, the Estonian people look for international assurances that their security is a matter of international concern.

Mr. HAYES (Ireland): I should like to begin, Mr. Chairman, by congratulating you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee, and assuring you of the fullest cooperation and support of my delegation in your important task. Knowing you as I do, Sir, I have no doubt that under your able direction this session of the First Committee will be productive and worthwhile. I should also like to extend our congratulations and best wishes to the other members of the Bureau.

The Ambassador of the United Kingdom spoke earlier in this general debate on behalf of the European Community and its member States. I, of course, associate myself fully with his remarks.

The Committee will consider many issues and draft resolutions in the weeks to come. I should like to focus today on three areas which, in my Government's view, demand special and urgent attention. Let me sharpen the

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

focus by posing three questions. First, how can we translate the valuable progress that has been made in nuclear-arms control in recent years into irreversible steps in the process of nuclear disarmament? Secondly, how can we harness the new spirit of cooperation that exists today in the field of international security relations to settle regional conflicts? Thirdly, how should we address the problem of excessive accumulations of conventional weapons which threaten regional stability in many parts of the world?

In my statement to the Committee last year I welcomed the reductions that had been made in the levels of nuclear weapons and those which were in prospects. This year I should like to reiterate that welcome and extend it to include the further reductions announced by four of the five nuclear Powers in the course of the year.

I particularly salute the agreement reached between President Bush and President Yeltsin last June. That agreement holds out the prospect of dramatic reductions in their nuclear weapons, far beyond those anticipated under the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START).

My Government recognizes the courage and foresight required to reach such agreements. We know that forces and weapons once built up can be very difficult to reduce. We are aware, too, of the great cost, in terms of both finance and effort, required to implement such reductions, even if this is a relatively small amount compared to the vast sums expended on buying arms every year. None the less, we do not underestimate the difficulties which face both the United States and the Russian Federation in implementing the reductions they have agreed.

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

We are particularly concerned about the task facing the Russian Federation and some other countries of the former Soviet Union in relation to the dismantling and destruction of huge numbers of nuclear weapons which will give rise to enormous problems relating to the storage and disposal of fissionable materials. There are important issues here of both nuclear safety and nuclear non-proliferation which concern us all.

We welcome the assistance which has been provided by Western Governments as well as the resources being devoted to the task by the Government of the Russian Federation despite the many other demands on them. The international community, which will benefit from these reductions in nuclear weapons, has a responsibility to ensure that they are carried out in a safe and secure way. Above all, there must be assurances that this will be an irreversible process and that the fissionable materials removed from these weapons can never again be reassembled to make new nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

As members know, my delegation has consistently sponsored draft resolutions in this Committee calling for an end to the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes. At this stage, however, we need to look beyond the prohibition of new production of fissionable materials and ask ourselves what the international community can do to control existing stocks. These stocks are expanding rapidly as a result of the dismantling of nuclear weapons. We should consider in particular whether there may be a role for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in this area.

That is one way in which we could respond to the first question I posed at the beginning of my statement, namely how to convert the existing progress in nuclear-arms control into irreversible steps in the process of nuclear disarmament. But it is not the only way. Nor is it enough.

We must redouble our efforts to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons and to end nuclear testing once and for all. We must look beyond implementing agreed reductions in nuclear weapons and begin to consider their complete elimination, not just as a vague aspiration but as a realistic and achievable target.

Last year I advocated as an intermediate target the complete elimination of all substrategic nuclear weapons. We continue to believe that this is a step which could be taken without compromising the security of any State. Modern military doctrine and technology support this view. The idea of threatening nuclear annihilation in response to a conventional attack has effectively been abandoned. Modern military doctrine rules out the use of nuclear weapons in all but the most extreme circumstances.

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

We see every reason, therefore, why those countries which are not yet ready to give up the strategic nuclear option should be prepared to work together for the abolition of substrategic nuclear weapons, which, together with chemical and biological weapons, are amongst the most destabilizing of weapons. We again urge all the nuclear Powers to consider this step.

Another way in which we can make the process of nuclear disarmament irreversible is through putting an end to nuclear testing. For many years, in this Committee and elsewhere, my delegation, along with the vast majority of other delegations in this room, has called for the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Up to now, the response of the nuclear Powers has been that nuclear testing is essential to maintain the safety and reliability of their nuclear forces. We are therefore most gratified that, in the last year, three of the nuclear Powers have announced the suspension of their testing programmes. We warmly welcome the actions of the Russian Federation, of France and most recently of the United States, which have taken bold and significant steps that respond to the clearly expressed wishes of the international community.

The central question that must now be asked is whether the perceived advantages of nuclear testing are outweighed by the undoubted negative effects which this practice has on the international non-proliferation regime. As we approach the 1995 Conference for review and extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), this question will assume greater importance and we will all need to consider our response very carefully.

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

My delegation continues to believe that the issue of nuclear testing is inextricably linked to the question of nuclear non-proliferation and, in particular, to the future of the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty. Our position on this issue is clear: nuclear non-proliferation cannot be a one-way affair. Nor can it be an end in itself. If the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty does not lead us closer to the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, then it will ultimately become discredited and disregarded. It is imperative that this should not happen.*

We continue to regard the NPT as the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. For this reason, we fully share the view clearly expressed by a great number of speakers in this debate that the Treaty should be extended indefinitely beyond 1995. We have been extremely encouraged by the growing adherence to the Treaty. We welcome in particular the accessions of France and China, both of them nuclear Powers as well as permanent members of the Security Council. Their adherence will not only add greater authority and prestige to the Treaty but will ensure that all issues which are relevant to its future can be examined in a comprehensive way at the 1995 Conference. We appeal to those who remain outside the Treaty to join us in making the nuclear non-proliferation regime truly universal.

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* Mr. Suh (Republic of Korea), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

I also wish to draw attention specifically to what the representative of the United Kingdom said in the name of the European Community and its member States on other important non-proliferation issues, including IAEA safeguards and export controls; I, of course, endorse what he said in that respect.

The second question I posed at the beginning of my statement was: How can the international community harness the good will that has developed in international security relations to settle regional conflicts?

Obvious current examples are the conflicts in Yugoslavia and the situation in Somalia. In addition, the lack of security in both places prevents the organization of adequate and effective humanitarian relief efforts. In Somalia, this security problem compounds the already difficult situation created by famine. At its meeting at Birmingham last week, the European Council called on all the parties involved in Somalia to observe an immediate cease-fire to allow the rapid distribution of aid, and it called for the rapid deployment of United Nations troops to the areas where they are needed.

The progress made in disarmament in recent years is, of course, helpful in regard to regional conflicts also. Efforts to combat the proliferation of all forms of weapons of mass destruction have increased. In addition, there is a new sense of cooperation, if not yet of partnership, in the international approach to security issues. The role of the United Nations has been strengthened. In our approach to international security there is, more and more, a tendency to see military force as a measure which can be used legitimately only on the authority of the Security Council and then only as a measure of last resort.

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

Another excellent example of this new spirit of cooperation is the successful conclusion of the negotiations on a draft Convention on chemical weapons after years of frustration and deadlock. We congratulate all concerned, but especially the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons of the Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador Adolf Ritter von Wagner, whose great skills and energies were instrumental in bringing about this achievement.

All these developments are welcome. And yet we all, I believe, feel a certain unease. We are conscious of the paradox that, while the world may be a less unsafe place than it was a few years ago, it is not necessarily a more peaceful place.

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

Regional stability is under threat in many parts of the world from a variety of causes. Global stability is threatened by the continued existence of large stocks of nuclear weapons and by the dangers of nuclear proliferation. Despite the existence of the biological and toxic weapons Convention and the recent conclusion of the chemical weapons Convention, a significant number of States still appear to be intent on developing chemical and biological weapons. It is as if some other States have felt the need to take up the mantle of the arms race which the super-Powers have cast off.

One of the main factors exacerbating so many regional conflicts is the existence of abnormally and unnecessarily high levels of conventional weapons. This is a feature of many of the current areas of tension and conflict. The threat posed by excessive accumulations of conventional weapons in many regions of the world deserves at least as much attention from the international community as does the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. This has been widely recognized, and the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is an important step towards tackling the problem of conventional weapons. As the representative of the United Kingdom has already made clear on behalf of the European Community and its member States, we attach considerable importance to this Register, and we hope that all States will cooperate to make it a success. We should all use this session of the First Committee to ensure that the Register is an immediate success when the first returns are made to it next year.

But transparency in arms transfers is not enough. The Irish Government believes that there is a need for restraint so that excessive numbers of weapons do not exacerbate or destabilize what might otherwise have remained peaceful situations.

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

We recognize, of course, that every State has the right, under the United Nations Charter, to acquire weapons for self-defence. We recognize, too, that it is difficult to define in any objective or empirical way the level of arms that any country requires for self-defence. At the same time, none of us has difficulty in recognizing a State that is over-armed. We should therefore consider what steps should be taken to reduce over-armament without interfering with the legitimate rights of States to provide for their self-defence.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland has spoken of his conviction that new and imaginative steps are called for in this area. He believes that one approach that might help realize this objective is the adoption of a code of conduct for conventional arms transfers. Such a code would call upon States voluntarily to exercise particular responsibility in their exports and imports of conventional weapons. It might include agreement to exercise special restraint in the transfer of advanced-technology weapons and in relation to countries and areas of tension. It might also include undertakings by States to exercise moderation in their military expenditure. While the code would not include specific limitations on transfers, States would undertake to ensure as far as possible that neither their own purchases nor their transfers to other States would in any way undermine international stability or security.

We would see this code of conduct as building on the steps that have already been taken towards developing a responsible and restrained approach to arms transfers. In June 1991 the European Community and its member States adopted a set of common criteria on which their arms export policies are based. These criteria include: the preservation of regional peace, security

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

and stability; respect for human rights in the country of final destination; and respect for international obligations, such as United Nations sanctions or non-proliferation agreements. In July 1991 the London economic summit of the Group of 7 countries adopted a set of principles to tackle the dangers posed by excessive holdings of conventional weapons. In October 1991 the five permanent members of the Security Council adopted a set of common guidelines for the export of conventional weapons.

We believe, therefore, that an international code of conduct could extend and strengthen these initiatives and give an opportunity to all States Members of the United Nations, both importers and exporters of arms, to demonstrate their commitment to restraint in this field. It would also complement the Organization's Register and demonstrate the close link between transparency and restraint.

We cannot stand still in our efforts to achieve disarmament. However progressive the steps that have already been taken, we must continue to look for new ways to carry forward the existing momentum.

To return to the questions I posed at the beginning of my statement, I believe that we can make the process of nuclear disarmament irreversible, that we can find ways to settle regional conflicts peacefully and that we can achieve greater restraint in conventional arms transfers. I have tried to suggest some ways in which this could be done. But the collective will and determination of all of us are needed to make it work. Let us show during this session that we possess that determination and that we have the will to apply it for the benefit of all our countries and peoples.

Mr. ERDENECHULUUN (Mongolia): In my statement today, I wish to touch upon the item dealing with chemical and bacteriological weapons.

Over the years Mongolia has consistently supported, and endeavoured to contribute to, the international community's efforts to outlaw and eliminate chemical weapons, the indiscriminate and deadly effects of which have been proved several times in this century. We share the view that recent momentous developments and changes in international structures facilitated the conclusion of work in the Conference on Disarmament on the draft chemical weapons Convention. At the same time, my delegation notes the hard work and perseverance that the Conference displayed in reaching that successful conclusion. I should like to extend our congratulations once again to all the participating countries, and particularly to the Australian and German delegations for their dedication and unremitting efforts.

Rightly described in paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.1 as an

"unprecedented, global, comprehensive and verifiable multilateral disarmament agreement"

the draft Convention should be valued for its own merit as a unique legal document that provides for the elimination of existing stockpiles and prohibits the production of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction.

(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

I wish to emphasize here that we also see the Convention as yet another milestone on the road towards a world free from weapons of mass destruction.

Fully implemented and properly verified, the Convention would make a significant contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security. It also casts a new and positive light on the ongoing efforts to create zones free from weapons of mass destruction and it furthers the cause of the non-proliferation of such weapons.

Mongolia hopes that the wealth of experience gained during the years of negotiations with a view to finding a delicate balance of interests, especially in the area of verification, will prove to be helpful in future multilateral disarmament negotiations.

Already today the idea of applying, with the necessary modifications, the concept of a challenge-inspection regime to an existing disarmament agreement, namely the Convention on biological weapons deserves, in our view, careful consideration by the international community.

My delegation holds that the successful conclusion of the Convention on chemical weapons has been instrumental in encouraging Governments to renew their commitments to the multilateral disarmament efforts. We hope that the Conference on Disarmament, with its newly increased credibility and prestige, will benefit from this development and will make long-sought progress on other items on its agenda.

In a broader scope, we consider the Convention to be an important contribution to the emergence of a new and global approach to security and disarmament issues.

(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

Mongolia reaffirms its announced intention to be among the original signatories of the Convention and looks forward to participating in the signing ceremony in Paris early next year.

We also expect the Preparatory Commission to be set up pursuant to the Convention to begin its work as soon as possible, in order to ensure the smooth implementation of the provisions of the Convention, and also to render necessary assistance to the national bodies to be established under the Convention. We fully support the proposal by Australia for the organization, at an early date, of a meeting of the heads of national secretariats responsible for matters relating to the Convention that would help to ensure the uniform implementation of the Convention and to register any difficulties experienced in so doing.

As a country that plans to develop its chemical industry, Mongolia intends to make full use of the provisions of the Convention pertaining to the encouragement of economic and technological development and cooperation within the chemical industry and to the promotion of trade.

We welcome the selection of The Hague as the seat of the future organization for the prohibition of chemical weapons. We regret that the question of the composition of the Executive Council, one of the main bodies of the organization, has not been settled to the satisfaction of all sides. Nevertheless, my delegation trusts that the organization will be able to discharge its responsibilities effectively. We also hope that the organization's secretariat will be composed of qualified multinational staff and will pay particular attention to training inspectors and specialists from the developing countries.

Mr. AL-BATTASHI (Oman) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me at the outset to extend to Mr. Elaraby of Egypt, on behalf of the delegation of the Sultanate of Oman, our sincere congratulations on his election as Chairman of this Committee. We are confident that his diplomatic qualifications and experience will have a great impact on the work of our Committee.

We are also pleased to express to his predecessor, the Under-Secretary of State of Poland, our great appreciation for his wise leadership of the Committee during the last session.

Our heartfelt congratulations also go to the other officers of the Committee.

We have been deeply saddened by the recent catastrophe that struck Egypt, and through Mr. Elaraby would like to express to the Government and people of the sister Arab Republic of Egypt our heartfelt condolences over this tragedy. Undoubtedly, the fraternal people of Egypt will overcome the current ordeal through their well-known stamina and patience.

We meet this year in an atmosphere of détente in international relations. The collapse of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the former Soviet Union put an end to East-West confrontation. We who are concerned with the issues of disarmament should be proud of the achievements made at the bilateral and international levels in terms of agreements and instruments that led to a reduction in the intensity of confrontation. Indeed, this confrontation has been replaced by effective cooperation. However, what has been achieved does not live up to the high expectations we have in regard to the total elimination of all forms of weapons of mass destruction, in order to attain our goal of a peaceful, cooperative and interdependent world.

(Mr. Al-Battashi, Oman)

The challenges that face the world in the area of armaments remain enormous and difficult given the stockpiles of various types of weapons of mass destruction. For example, the arsenals of nuclear weapons, and what they represent in terms of terror, remain in place. There is rivalry in developing new and sophisticated weapons systems under various pretexts of the balance of terror that were often used in the past. These pretexts have been refined and sugar-coated in order to justify the acquisition of such weapons by some Powers under the pretext of threats to national security, as claimed by some countries. Under all circumstances, such pretexts are untenable and the world has to stand firmly against those who flout the international will.

The Middle East is a case in point where this spectre of terror constantly threatens its inhabitants, and the nuclear weapons in the Middle East will bring nothing but horror and massive destruction. The existence of such weapons is also cause for concern because of the instability and insecurity they cause in the region.

From this rostrum, the Sultan of Oman appeals to the world to take all immediate measures in order to put an end to the stockpiles of nuclear weapons. The security of our region cannot be isolated from world peace and security, given the organic links between the Middle East region and other parts of the world, in terms of culture, economics, politics and geography. Therefore, the Middle East region should become free from nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Al-Battashi, Oman)

There is no doubt that the United Nations is called upon to play a pioneering and wider role in this respect.

What we have said about nuclear weapons holds true for chemical weapons given their massive destructive power. My country feels that the Draft Convention on the Prohibition, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, recently concluded in Geneva, is an appropriate instrument for the total elimination of chemical weapons. However, this Convention will be effective only if, and when its provisions are respected and complied with. Furthermore, the Convention will not have a meaningful effect on the regional level since many regions are saturated with nuclear weapons and some regional Powers do not allow the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to inspect their installations. It follows that, the reluctance on the part of some States to sign and accede to the Convention, in our view, is quite legitimate given the aforesaid reasons.

We should like to praise the stand by the two super nuclear Powers, namely the Russian Federation and the United States in terms of their relations in the area of disarmament. The special agreement to reduce their arsenals to one-third is indeed heartwarming and we fully support that stand because it enhances the credibility of the two Powers and demonstrates their resolve to achieve yet more progress in the area of disarmament.

In this context, we are extremely pleased by the recent declaration on the part of the United States of a nine-month moratorium on tests. My country feels that this declaration will give the cause of disarmament new impetus and will invigorate the effort of other States that seek the elimination of armaments.

(Mr. Al-Battashi, Oman)

Testing, despite any accompanying clarifications, any accompanying remain a primary concern in the area of armaments. If the international community is indeed serious about the elimination of armaments in order to build a free and interdependent world, it is our view that the international community should look in a more serious manner into the testing and research that continue under various pretexts.

There is no doubt that the persistent development of new weapons must be disappointing to an international community that genuinely seeks disarmament. Therefore, the solution lies, in our view, in the complete cessation of those tests.

My country is fully aware of the technical difficulties and challenges that hamper the efforts of some States in this area. Confidence-building and transparency are the cornerstones upon which understanding between the super-Powers is built. We hope that this subject will be accorded more attention so that the programme for total disarmament will go ahead as we had hoped.

Last year in the Committee, Oman declared its support in principle of the idea of setting up a register for the transfer and sale of conventional weapons. At the same time, we stressed the fact that the elements of universality, non-discrimination and transparency should figure prominently in that project if the sponsors wanted to secure the greatest support for the programme. Regrettably, however, my country continues to have some concerns regarding the conclusions of the study by the expert group. We shall follow closely the developments in regard to this issue.

(Mr. Al-Battashi, Oman)

Although the question of naval armaments has been the subject of lengthy discussions, it has been put on the back burner. We view with concern this type of armament which poses great dangers for the small countries that do not possess sophisticated naval armaments systems. In this context, we call upon all States that have highly advanced and great military weapons to take certain measures in order to reduce the hazards of confrontation and incidents at sea, especially in the case of nuclear-powered ships and submarines that roam the seas.

The consequences of such confrontation, if they do take place, could be extremely dangerous. In this context, we feel that bilateral efforts should be supported and complemented by world-wide efforts through the Conference on Disarmament. Peaceful measures should be formulated for non-military marine activities and guarantees should be given in situations of conflict to coastal States and to the ships that belong to neutral States.

The Sultanate of Oman has consistently supported all efforts made in international forums with a view to making the Indian Ocean a weapon-free zone. My country has called upon all parties to set aside their differences and to look into this matter in a more serious fashion given the fact that the Indian Ocean represents a common heritage of mankind and an international route through which various civilizations throughout history have benefited from the exchange between peoples. We once again call upon this international gathering to support the efforts aimed at ridding the area of weapons of terror. In this context, the Sultanate of Oman supports the tireless efforts being made in order to convene the Indian Ocean Conference in Colombo in 1993. We call upon all interested States to support the work of the

(Mr. Al-Battashi, Oman)

preparatory committee on the Conference and to show more cooperation and flexibility in order to enable the Committee to achieve the desired goal of convening the Conference in the interest of all parties. It is our sincere hope that these parties will respond to the call of reason since the region can no longer tolerate more posturing and manoeuvering in terms of security that is part of world security.*

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* The Chairman returned to the Chair.

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My country has consistently supported disarmament efforts. However, given some States' attempts to acquire lethal weapons, we feel it to be very important that, in cases of aggression, guarantees should be given to States that are less well armed. Such guarantees should be effective enough to redress the balance, even on a limited scale.

The Sultanate of Oman fully supports efforts to establish regional weapons-free zones. The main responsibility for this lies with the States of any given region, and their efforts should be supported by the international community in cases where regional and international efforts are complementary. If narrow self-interest policies, unilateralism and the pursuit of hegemony prevail in any region, any effort to establish such weapons-free zones will be doomed to failure. States should recognize that the world today is in the grip of astounding changes and is moving towards reconciliation and the promotion of security and peace.

Disarmament and international peace and security are complementary, and in no circumstance can one be addressed without the other. They are organically interlinked. Thus, any progress in one area will have a positive impact on the other.

The future augurs well for the constant efforts being made in the field of disarmament. However, we should not be overoptimistic, because the challenges remain enormous and the setbacks to peace and security in many regions - as a result of ethnic conflicts and deterioration of the economic and social conditions of some peoples - are well known. Naturally, any solution to such problems cannot be effective if there is unwarranted interference in the internal affairs of some States by others. Given our keen interest in world security, we feel that regional conflicts should be dealt with by our world Organization and addressed on the basis of established

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guidelines and rules that are acceptable to the parties in conflict. The world Organization is responsible for ensuring equality and justice if it intervenes with a view to settling a dispute.

The Sultanate of Oman, given its philosophy anchored in the principles of good-neighbourliness, non-interference in the internal affairs of others, mutual interest, and the promotion of dialogue as a means to resolving disputes, feels that this approach can best achieve long-term peaceful co-existence. Our recent signature of the border demarcation agreement with the sisterly Republic of Yemen on 1 October 1992, stemmed from our deep belief in the correctness of the aforesaid principles. The realization of our aspirations after a peaceful and interdependent world depends on our observance of the principles of coexistence and mutual cooperation. Respect for the principles of good-neighbourliness, non-intervention and dialogue ensures security and cooperation.

Proceeding from its belief in these objective principles, the Sultanate of Oman was indeed surprised by recent developments in the relations between its two sisterly neighbour States of the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Republic of Iran in regard to the disputed islands. We declare here that we oppose the principle of annexation of the territory of others by force, a precedent which, in our view, should be immediately and unequivocally addressed by the international community. We also declare that the United Arab Emirates has a territorial and sovereign right over the islands in question. We appeal to the Islamic Republic of Iran to demonstrate prudence and rationality in dealing with this issue, and to respect the principles and tenets of peaceful coexistence and good-neighbourliness that have dominated

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relations between the two friendly peoples so as to avoid the immersion of the region anew in the hotbeds of conflict that have long afflicted it.

With every passing day, we recognize the ever greater importance and vital role of our Organization. It is no secret that the world Organization has been playing a more active role in the resolution of various world problems. In the 1990s, the Organization has demonstrated its vital role in addressing many problems. This is a fact that my country recognizes with gratitude. However, we feel that the tasks entrusted to our Organization today have grown more noble and serious and that - given the issues faced by our world in the areas of the environment, economic and social development - the role of the Organization has become much more difficult.

In the past, the primary mandate of the Organization was in the fields of the maintenance of peace, disarmament, and certain political issues. All of us today are called upon to consolidate and enhance the effectiveness of the world Organization and to give it every possible support in shouldering its responsibilities. We in Oman are very optimistic about the future role of the world Organization if all countries lend the necessary support. We stand ready to play our modest role in this context.

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One of the major problems that preoccupy us all is the question of the degradation and pollution of the environment. We are extremely concerned over certain uncivilized practices by some States that bury the toxic wastes of their military industries either unilaterally or through some transnational corporations in the territories of other countries, especially in Africa, the Middle East and the South Pacific. These are extremely dangerous practices that cause a great deal of harm to the environment and to living species.

The immoral spreading of these toxic wastes should be dealt with decisively by the international community. The Sultanate of Oman, proceeding from its deeply rooted understanding of the issue of the environment and its great interest in those issues, calls for greater and much more comprehensive attention to the environment at the international level. In this regard, Oman addresses a call from the heart to whom it may concern to listen to the voice of conscience and to desist forthwith from this reckless environmental bickering that is most damaging to our civilized achievements. In the same vein, we call upon the international community to face up with unwavering firmness to this problem, by formulating effective legal instruments that prohibit the burial of toxic wastes in the territories of others.

The question of outer space exploration is of great importance to the whole world and should not be the prerogative of some developed countries. Therefore, we appeal in all sincerity to all the technologically advanced countries that possess great economic and scientific capabilities to stop using outer space as an arena for rivalry, conflict and the arms race, with all the horrors that that entails for mankind as a whole. We in Oman value very highly any scientific achievement by any advanced country that could benefit all mankind. Therefore, we support the proposal of freeing outer

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space from the arms race and the exclusive use of outer space for beneficial scientific exploration that may enrich humanity's thought and scientfic knowledge.

The importance of technology in today's world needs no elaboration. Some countries have made great leaps in terms of technological advancement, while other States do not have the necessary capabilities for making such achievements, as those capabilities have remained the preserve of the industrialized countries. There is an urgent need today for the advanced and developed nations to understand the nature of the appeals by the developing nations for assistance in the area of technology. My country supports the proposal regarding the transfer of peaceful technology from the developed to the developing countries if we really wish to ensure the continuance of a viable and sound partnership between the wealthy North and the poor South in the interest of both sides.

In conclusion, my country welcomes and supports all efforts in the field of disarmament. Such efforts will have a positive outcome that will benefit future generations, which, we hope, will not live even for a moment under the threat of the weapons of mass destruction. The opportunity afforded the world today will not be repeated. It is very necessary and extremely important that we avail ourselves of any opportunity, especially in the area of disarmament. If we all work in concert with the full support of people all over the world, we may rest assured that irreversible disarmament will be achieved in real earnest. However, we should not give in to overoptimism. In the area of disarmament, the challenges are many and difficult, and they will not be resolved effectively overnight. However, with determination, we can obtain results. The 1990s will certainly be the decade of a qualitative shift in the area of disarmament. We do hope that in the twenty-first century the

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world will see the realization of its aspirations and live in peace, security and prosperity.

Mr. KPAKPO (Benin) (interpretation from French): The delegation of Benin takes pleasure in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. My delegation is convinced that you will continue to guide our work with your customary talent, acknowledged by all.

Our congratulations also go to the other officers of the Committee, experienced diplomats in whom Benin places its trust, as well as to the Secretariat team, which deserves our gratitude for its commitment to the cause of peace.

Constructive changes have been taking place on the international scene since the end of the 1980s. Confrontation and global rivalry are being replaced by understanding, dialogue and international cooperation.

With the end of the cold war, there is a growing perception of the need to base national security policies no longer on the constant build-up of weapons or on military and strategic superiority, but rather on unilateral measures or joint efforts to bring about substantial, balanced reductions in weapons, to levels compatible with legitimate defence needs alone.

That is why my delegation welcomes, as have delegations of other members of the Non-Aligned Movement, various recent initiatives to move on from a freeze of armaments to their reduction, control and even their total elimination. The stockpiling and development of weapons have only increased the danger of insecurity in the world, and might continue to do so.

In this favourable context, one might note, inter alia: the unilateral initiatives by the two super-Powers without protracted negotiations to reduce their nuclear arsenals; the Lisbon Protocol of 23 May 1992 signed by the

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United States and the four former Soviet Republics with nuclear weapons in their territories, which have, moreover, undertaken to ratify the START Treaty; the accession of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), while undertaking to destroy all their nuclear arsenals covered by the START Treaty by 1999; the various unilateral moratoriums on nuclear tests; and the accession this year of China and France, which are also nuclear Powers, to the NPT.

These are favourable initiatives, increasing in number throughout the world, which are leading the way to denuclearization or to the establishment of areas free of weapons of mass destruction in different regions, owing to the individual or collective good will of States which have more weapons than they strictly need.

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Everywhere we see good prospects of progress towards an end to national crises such as apartheid and towards the settlement of regional conflicts.

At the Security Council Summit Meeting on 31 January 1992 the international community took the opportunity to reaffirm, at the highest political level, its commitment to world peace and development. The Security Council has shown that it is now capable of settling conflicts, and as a result has brought about an increase in United Nations peace-keeping and peacemaking activities.

In the area of disarmament, the Security Council has committed itself to working for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Thus the Special Committee established under Security Council resolution 687 (1991), which formalized the end of the Gulf War, is engaged in preventing the proliferation of such weapons in the Middle East.

In a more general context, we are moving towards the adoption of specific measures to increase awareness within the disarmament process, using the guidelines and recommendations of the Disarmament Commission on the provision of objective information on military issues and the universal and non-discriminatory Register of Conventional Arms now being prepared at Headquarters. It is expected that other types of weapons will eventually be included.

Now that the Conference on Disarmament has succeeded, after several years of negotiation, in coming up with a draft Convention on the elimination of chemical weapons, the delegation of Benin wishes to congratulate the negotiators on their efforts and to make special mention of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Adolf Ritter von Wagner of Germany, who served the Committee with such talent and dedication.

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We all know that elaborating any security measure for all is difficult, because the legitimate security concerns of all parties are not always the same, and the differences make it difficult to reconcile all interests. None the less, the draft Convention on chemical weapons, which will soon be open for signature, is a sign of hope, and may one day lead to a verifiable disarmament treaty.

Benin, which has never believed that the use of force in international relations is a viable solution, does not possess chemical weapons or facilities to produce them and has no intention of developing either. This belief has led it to become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.1. Benin has taken note, with sincere satisfaction, of the draft Convention, which opens up prospects of international cooperation in the area of the peaceful chemical industry, and will sign and ratify the Convention as soon as the provisions of its constitution allow.

As a party to the Convention on biological weapons, Benin welcomes the continuation of the work of the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts to Identify and Examine Potential Verification Measures for the Biological Weapons Convention, because the verification measures are likely to strengthen the Convention by discouraging manufacture. Benin is convinced that, in addition to exchanges of information on biological research to increase confidence between the States Parties, it will be possible to add a real verification regime to this Convention.

Despite these positive aspects and the improvement in the international political climate, there are both military and non-military threats still hanging over international peace and security and over common international values such as democracy. The military threats include the following:

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the persistent possibility of a deliberate or accidental nuclear war as a result of the attachment of some Powers to the outmoded policy of nuclear deterrence; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems - ballistic missiles - and the proliferation of technologies with both military and peaceful uses; the destruction of chemical weapons, with the resultant risks to health and the environment; transfers of conventional weapons, which make ethnic, religious, social, cultural and linguistic struggles more violent, by promoting terrorism or by enabling authoritarian regimes to resist democratic developments in their societies by force of arms.

The not inconsiderable list of non-military threats includes demographic pressure; the international economic crisis, including the external debt burden, which is overwhelming the least well off, and protectionism, which is blocking the flow of trade; drugs; poverty; diseases, such as AIDS and malaria; famine; refugees; and environmental damage.

With the disappearance of East-West antagonisms and ideological rifts, the world today is more than ever, interdependent, especially because of progress in the area of communications, which are tending to unify the planet. In this new global village the challenges on the road to survival are common to us all, as we are so eloquently reminded by the conclusions of the Rio Earth Summit. It is therefore important for us to promote security for all through international cooperation on the basis of appropriate collective measures, such as disarmament; the establishment of a true collective security system based on common standards and rules, including the peaceful settlement of disputes, the prevention of conflicts through strengthening

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confidence-building measures such as integration and cooperation; and the elimination of non-military threats to security.

Disarmament - in other words, the elimination of States' potential for aggression - is an important element for guaranteeing security for all countries, large and small, especially since the security - defined in a self-centred way - of one country can be strengthened only at the expense of the security of another. My delegation therefore considers that our Organization must continue to give priority to the total elimination of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, because of their capacity for destruction, even if launched accidentally. We should begin by stopping their development, manufacture and modernization, and by stopping production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes.

The multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations have not made progress so far, because the nuclear Powers perceive their security in terms of nuclear deterrence, discouraging a potential enemy from using nuclear weapons against them, thus creating a balance of terror. In the light of the profound changes that have taken place in a world that has become interdependent and is threatened by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, this attachment to nuclear weapons, which threaten the survival of humankind, now seems outmoded. Benin therefore recommends to the Conference on Disarmament that it should do everything possible to overcome the differences over which nuclear disarmament items to include in the agenda, as reflected in the Conference's annual report (A/47/27).

Benin also urges the Conference on Disarmament to continue the current in-depth examination of the question of expanding its membership, which must better reflect the security concerns of the entire international community, in all its diversity.

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A total, comprehensive and verifiable nuclear-weapon-test ban seems essential if progress is to be made towards nuclear disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament, which includes all the nuclear Powers, must be able to work with the Chairman of the Amendment Conference for the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty to transform it into a Treaty instituting a total, verifiable ban of all nuclear-weapon tests.

Moreover, given the growing danger of the spread of nuclear weapons, it is important to strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), whose existence since 1968 has not prevented an increase in the number of nuclear weapons in the world. Unfortunately, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which has the mandate to carry out verification, can inspect peaceful nuclear facilities under safeguards agreements only at the invitation of the States concerned.*

My delegation feels that in the interest of the security of all, when the NPT - which expires in 1995 - is renewed, the States parties must work to strengthen its universality while taking into account the recommendations of the IAEA regarding, inter alia, special inspections of suspect nuclear installations.

There is also a need to control transfers of dual-use technology. Benin is in favour of the application of science and technology for socio-economic improvement and improving methods of verifying or implementing disarmament agreements, such as those on destroying chemical and nuclear weapons; their destruction will not cost much, and will yield "peace dividends", at no risk to health or the environment.

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* Mr. Patokallio (Finland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

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Overarmament - that is, an excessive defence effort - is the source of budgetary deficits and can weaken the economic capacities of States. It contributes to the disruption of the international economy and causes hardship for the international community as a whole and in particular for the most disadvantaged nations, which, because of their large military expenditures, live in social and economic insecurity.

Hunger could disappear from the Earth by the year 2000 if we earmarked for that goal one fifth of the money now spent in the world for military purposes - for example, for 556 soldiers compared to 35 doctors per 100,000 people. There is reason to encourage any reduction in military expenditures, which certainly would contribute to the recovery of the international economy. Reconversion of military installations by integrating them into the civilian economy must also be kept in mind by everyone. My country intends to continue such reconversion, which it began following the democratic renewal that brought with it the withdrawal of military people from the national political arena which they had influenced and dominated for almost 30 years.

Global disarmament is an especially complex and slow process because we must take into account the security concerns of all the parties, which belong to different geographical regions. States in one region often have the same security interests, and therefore regional disarmament is a valuable complement to global disarmament. The two approaches can be taken simultaneously in the promotion of international peace and security.

That is why we must support and encourage the establishment of areas free of weapons of mass destruction in various regions of the world. In this regard, my delegation reaffirms its commitment to the effective

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denuclearization of Africa, which has been called for by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) since 1964 and was supported by the General Assembly in 1974 in its resolution 3261 (XXIX). Benin invites South Africa - which must proceed without further delay towards a multiracial democratic society in order to regain its proper place in the concert of nations - to adhere scrupulously to the obligations it has assumed by acceding to the non-proliferation Treaty and signing the safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency, so that the denuclearization of Africa can contribute effectively to strengthening the security of all the States involved, which refuse to countenance the dumping of radioactive waste in the region.

Within the framework of this regional disarmament process, the States in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, in Asia and in the Pacific, already have structures - theoretical but valuable - such as the regional centres for peace, development and disarmament. These centres are capable of supporting the various initiatives of those States, but they cannot properly carry out their mandate without a stable financial basis, and the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa in particular will still have to depend on voluntary contributions in order to maintain and develop its programme of work. Benin remains equally committed to seeing the South Atlantic become and remain a zone of peace, free of all nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction.

Disarmament, being a political process aimed at reducing armaments and military forces to the lowest possible level, strengthens security among States and thereby contributes to preserving peace. However, safeguarding

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peace must also involve implementing a collective security system as provided for in the United Nations Charter, which not only recommends in relations between States respect for the rules and principles of international law, political dialogue and international cooperation, but also envisages collective recourse to measures not requiring force and to force itself in order to discourage any aggression or military threat against peace. That is why the role of the United Nations in the area of peace-keeping and peacemaking must be strengthened.

In this regard, the report of the Secretary-General entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277) is an important document that stimulates increased reflection by all on the tasks to be carried out in this area, since the United Nations will not be able to play its role fully unless Member States fully support its activities throughout the world.

My delegation, which supports the General Assembly Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, whose implementation is necessary in this new, post-cold-war context, reaffirms its complete commitment to the principles governing friendly relations and cooperation between States. Indeed, desirous of living and developing in peace, Benin is committed to the policy of good-neighbourliness, joint action and cooperation - a policy which, in its relations with its immediate neighbours, is reflected in periodic summit meetings to discuss questions of common interest, and periodic ministerial meetings to increase the border inhabitants' awareness and thus create the security conditions needed to carry out the tasks of social and economic development and to guarantee peace on all sides of our borders.

That was the spirit in which Benin, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo concluded an agreement enabling them to prevent any risk of tension, disputes and conflicts

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between them in the West African subregion by strengthening their cooperation in matters of security.

Is not prevention always better than cure, as the Gulf War showed? Indeed, not only was Iraq destroyed after invading Kuwait, but Kuwait, the victim that was liberated, is in ruins - not to mention the substantial damage done to the environment in the region or the risks of the conflict spreading owing to the use of ballistic missiles, among other things. That is why my delegation believes in the effectiveness of preventive diplomacy, which was recommended by the Security Council Summit Meeting. Indeed, this approach, as expressed by the Secretary-General in his "Agenda for Peace", has the advantage not only of preventing

> "disputes from arising between parties, [preventing] existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and [limiting] the spread of the latter when they occur" (A/47/277, para. 20),

but also of preventing flagrant, mass violations of human rights and promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes through mediation, good offices and reconciliation; it also presupposes the maximum use of the full potential of the United Nations, such as recourse to its judicial body, the International Court of Justice, since political crisis situations leading to overarmament often involve juridical factors as well.

It is in this framework of collective preventive measures that we also find the various initiatives for promoting and strengthening confidence, security and cooperation at various levels in the world - for example, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe; the project for a process of security, stability and cooperation in Africa, which currently is facing enormous problems that are undermining security there and hence throughout the

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world; and the zone of peace and cooperation in the South Atlantic - which Benin belongs to - whose objective is to develop more stable relations through integration and cooperation, by reducing or even eliminating the causes of mistrust, fear and other factors that cause tensions, the risk of conflicts among nations, and the excessive accumulation of armaments.

This approach should also include the solution of all security problems, including overarmament and non-military threats to international security, in particular the worsening of the socio-economic situation in the present interdependent world, where negative socio-economic factors can undermine international security. We have a situation where merely a drop in or levelling out of growth rates could place people into the vicious circle of tension and crises, with the probable collapse of political and social cohesion, leading to civil wars, inter-State conflicts and increased flows of refugees.

Therefore we cannot overemphasize the close relationship between disarmament, security, development and democracy. Without development - which implies the constant improvement of the peoples' well-being through their full participation in all sectors of the various processes involved and in the equitable distribution of benefits - there is no disarmament, no security, no democracy. Indeed, poverty or the absence of hope for the future creates frustrations that elicit authoritarian and anti-democratic reactions on the one hand and rebellion on the other, thus generating violence everywhere.

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Strengthening international security through preventive diplomacy must therefore take into account socio-economic development, in particular by reorganizing international economic relations on a fair and equitable basis which means generating sustained economic growth for all. That implies an immediate resumption of the North-South dialogue, with the participation of countries whose economies are in transition.

The delegation of Benin welcomes the fact that the recent United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro made everyone aware of the need to establish a true partnership between rich and poor for development that compromises neither the present generation nor future generations. That is important for strengthening international security.

In this complex political process, the delegation of Benin invites our Committee to work to promote understanding among Member States in order to reduce the gap between their legitimate - though often selfish - perception of their national interest and the even more legitimate perception of the general interest of mankind as a whole.

We should also attach all due importance to the work of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, which should be able to assist us effectively.

Mrs. KABA (Côte d'Ivoire) (interpretation from French): On behalf of my delegation I should like to express my warm congratulations to the chairman on his well deserved election. My congratulations also go to the other officers of the Committee.

The delegation of Côte d'Ivoire also wishes to associate itself with the expressions of sympathy to his country following the disaster that has

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plunged Egypt into mourning. Many natural catastrophes such as that earthquake, in the face of which man is helpless, have sown desolation. What happened in Egypt could happen elsewhere, with science and technology unable to prevent it.

Unfortunately, situations brought about by man because of his thirst for power and his instincts for aggression and domination are even more numerous and deadly. Men have armed themselves with all kinds of weapons - nuclear, chemical, biological and conventional - deployed on land, on the sea, under the sea and in the air, not to mention the satellite and radar observation systems that make those weapons more precise and more destructive.

Considerable resources have been swallowed up in the unbridled arms race, which some like to justify with the Roman adage, "Si vis pacem, para bellum"; "If you desire peace, prepare for war". However, when the arms race started the world had just emerged from a terrible world war. It had just adopted a Charter in which it declared that it would protect future generations from the scourge of war and maintain international peace and security, while promoting economic and social progress for all peoples.

As soon as it was adopted, the Charter entered the darkest period of its history. The cold war fuelled overarmament and outbreaks of regional conflict, and increased distrust among the peoples of the United Nations. The abuse of the right of veto in the Security Council allowed certain conflicts that could have been contained to become worse. It has been estimated that there have been well over 150 conflicts in the world since the adoption of the Charter, with more than 20 million deaths. In 1987 alone 22 wars caused the deaths of 2.2 million people, 84 per cent of them civilians.

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Nevertheless, the Charter created mechanisms for the pacific settlement of disputes, in Chapter VI, and provided for action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression, in Chapter VII, while prohibiting recourse to the threat or the use of force in international relations. While these provisions may not have prevented the outbreak of conflicts, they have formed the legal basis of United Nations action for disarmament and arms control. Thus the United Nations has fostered concerted efforts by Governments, both bilaterally and multilaterally, which have led to the adoption of numerous treaties and conventions on arms limitations and disarmament.

One can cite the 1959 Antarctic Treaty, the first to declare a nuclear-weapon-free zone; the 1967 outer space Treaty; the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; the 1971 seabed Treaty; and the 1972 biological weapons Convention. Côte d'Ivoire has signed or ratified most of those international instruments.

Bilateral, regional and multilateral disarmament agreements have multiplied, there have been special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and the World Disarmament Campaign has been stepped up. All these things give reason for hope that the world will respond to the aspirations of the founders of our Organization.

In addition, with the end of the cold war, the spectre of nuclear war has receded. The breakup of the communist bloc and the Warsaw Pact has promoted a revival of trust between the two world Powers. Disarmament seems to be a reality, and one may allow oneself to imagine the beneficial consequences of disarmament for the economic situation of the developing countries.

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The Final Document of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, which took place from 21 August to 11 September 1987 in New York, contains an action programme that is essential for the developing countries. This programme aims to promote an integrated approach to diasarmament, development and security. It provides for strengthening the role of the United Nations in the interdependent areas of disarmament and development, and above all in promoting a better understanding of non-military threats to international security.

The concept of world security is not limited to the question of military threats and war. It involves other threats to the vital interests of our planet. Security extends beyond military matters to political, economic and ecological concerns that could endanger mankind's survival.

The deep economic crisis in many developing countries, which has brought utter poverty to the lives of so many people, could cause the collapse of certain societies. The aggravation of the debt crisis, the shortage of capital and the risk of trade war are dark clouds over the world. New democracies could fall prey to the frustrations of populations who might reject democratic regimes, preferring a return of dictatorship, which would be an irreversible step backwards for the promotion of human rights.

The great uncertainty of this rapidly changing world fosters the resurgence of ethnic and religious conflicts, as has been shown by the crisis in Yugoslavia. Ecological problems, such as global warming because of the greenhouse effect, the thinning of the ozone layer, desertification and rising sealevels, threaten our survival. It will certainly not be through traditional concepts of security based on containment, balance of power,

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deterrence and hegemonistic stability that we will resolve the problems posed by these scourges, which are real threats to international peace and security.

Without economic and social development, a State is exposed to social conflicts and political instability, which jeopardize internal security, and even regional security if they cause floods of refugees.*

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* The Chairman returned to the Chair.

(Mrs. Kaba, Côte d'Ivoire)

The United Nations system must turn its attention without delay to the non-military threats to peace posed by economic poverty, social injustice and oppression. It must implement a global strategy to eliminate these threats, which are today far more real, more urgent and weightier than the risk of world-wide military conflagration.

International security and regional security are intimately related; they draw strength from one another. My country encourages all measures intended to strengthen regional confidence and security. In 1964 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) declared the African continent a nuclear-weapon-free zone, and we support all initiatives along those lines. Defence agreements such as the non-aggression and defence agreement (ANAD) and that of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in our region of West Africa play an important role in establishing and maintaining regional peace.

The peaceful settlement of disputes through negotiation, conciliation, mediation or recourse to the International Court of Justice by regional countries is essential for the maintenance of peace. Trust is increased by the strengthening of regional cooperation through increased exchanges, the establishment of free-trade zones, and the promotion of regional projects for economic integration and the environment. Such a climate of trust would promote the reduction of military expenditures and ease the establishment of a conflict-prevention system, as advocated by the Secretary-General in his "Agenda for Peace".

My delegation earnestly hopes that all Members of the Organization will support measures to strengthen confidence at the regional level with a view to promoting cooperation and safeguarding regional security.

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My country congratulates all States that unilaterally or bilaterally have taken courageous steps towards general and complete disarmament. The United Nations Register of arms transfers is vital, for its proper functioning could shed light on the sources of the weapons that fuel regional conflicts. The Organization should discourage such transfers and make increased use of arms embargoes against conflict zones.

The world no longer needs to prepare for war in order to create peace; it needs development. It is by supporting efforts towards democratization, development, regional security and cooperation that we can contribute to the establishment of lasting world peace.

The United Nations is the proper forum for such efforts to bring about a better world, a world where peace, justice and solidarity will reign, a world free from war and poverty. Let us work together to achieve those objectives of the United Nations Charter.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall call now on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that the Committee will follow the procedure I outlined at an earlier meeting: the first statement in right of reply may not exceed 10 minutes and the second may not exceed five minutes; each delegation may make only two statements in right of reply.

Mr. HANATANI (Japan): Japan has asked to speak in order to respond to the statement made yesterday by the representative of North Korea, in which he referred to plutonium being stored in Japan. Japan would like to take this opportunity to explain clearly its plutonium programme.

(Mr. Hanatani, Japan)

First, as a non-nuclear-weapon State, Japan is firmly committed to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and has no plans whatsoever to develop nuclear weapons.

Secondly, enriched plutonium is an essential part of Japan's efforts to diversify sources for its energy needs and thereby develop a sound basis for the livelihood of its people.

Thirdly, Japan has strictly complied with the full-scope safeguards requirements of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It has long accepted IAEA inspections and confines its nuclear activities strictly to peaceful purposes under its domestic regulations.

On the other hand, I cannot but point out that it was not until very recently that North Korea indicated its acceptance of IAEA inspections. Furthermore, North Korea has not been receptive to the proposal made by the Republic of Korea for a mutual inspections regime between the two countries, thus missing the opportunity to dispel doubts about its nuclear-development programme.

Japan strongly urges North Korea to take the necessary steps to clear completely such doubts, as soon as possible.

Mr. AL-MIKHIM (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation listened to the statement made this morning by the representative of Iraq, and I wish to make the following remarks in that context.

Towards the end of his statement this morning, the representative of Iraq said that those who invited foreign troops to the region and concluded agreements with those forces had brought instability to the region. He was referring implicitly to those who stood on the side of right in order to

(Mr. Al-Mikhim, Saudi Arabia)

liberate the State of Kuwait, and who used their resources to safeguard peace, to deter aggression and to defend their territory, namely Saudi Arabia.

In principle, I do not disagree with the representative of Iraq that friendly and brotherly troops came to our region; they came, in broad daylight, to do their duty: to restore right under a legal mandate issuing from the resolutions adopted by the international community. But the obvious question is who caused that situation? It was the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the immediate threat to the territory of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that prompted the international community to take a stand in favour of international legality. Consequently, those forces came on that basis.

Those were the circumstances under which troops gathered in the region. Thus, Iraqi aggression was the cause of instability and insecurity in the region, and the entire region has been suffering because of it to this very day.

Mrs. AL-MULLA (Kuwait): I should like to address three points in response to the statement made by the representative of the Iraqi regime this morning.

First, he stated that his country had been subjected to full-scale military aggression under the guise of Security Council resolution 678 (1990). This is an oft-repeated theme that is popular with the Iraqis nowadays. His failure to acknowledge 11 other resolutions adopted by the Security Council since Iraq invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990 can be attributed to ignorance or arrogance, or both. Resolution 678 (1990) did not exist in a vacuum. Military operations under that resolution were the natural result of Iraq's full-scale aggression and occupation of Kuwait.

My second point was addressed by the representative of Saudi Arabia, but for the record I should like to state the following: Iraq alleges that some had deprived the region of stability by inviting in foreign forces and by signing treaties of alliance with foreign Powers. Again, Iraq demonstrates a myopic view not only of history but also of current events. International forces, Arab, Muslim and others, were invited by sovereign States to assist in repelling an unprecedented aggression - Iraq's - against a State Member of the United Nations. Iraq actually chose to ignore the fact that not long ago it was associated with a treaty of friendship and cooperation with a foreign Power.

The third point I should like to address is the list of what the representative of the Iraqi regime claims to be compliance with section C of Security Council resolution 687 (1991). In connection with nuclear weapons, there are discrepancies between, on the one hand, what the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

(Mrs. Al-Mulla, Kuwait)

have found and, on the other, what the Iraqis claim with respect to certain items. Iraqi authorities have refused to provide information on sources of foreign procurement and foreign technological advice. Iraq's clandestine procurement network is still in place, as pointed out by Mr. Blix in his statement to the Assembly on 21 October. Iraq also has not returned documents seized from the sixth IAEA inspection team.

I should like to address another point relating to nuclear weapons - that is, the reference to Mr. Zifferero that the Iraqis are very fond of quoting. They always quote a particular part - and not others - of a press statement which was made in Baghdad and to which Iraq refused to publish a correction. According to the press release contained in document IAEA/1226, from Vienna, Mr. Zifferero had not intended to issue a clean bill of health for Iraq in the nuclear sphere. The press release goes on: "While no new knowledge has come to light recently, it is still too early to conclude that such will not be the case."

On chemical weapons: information on the production of chemical agents and weapons as well as information on Iraq's foreign suppliers is still lacking. On biological weapons: while UNSCOM has uncovered a research programme, little is known about its details. On ballistic missiles: the information supplied by Iraq is often meant to mislead. For example, commenting on UNSCOM inspection No. 42, the Chairman of the Special Commission said that Iraqi data had proved to be "unsatisfactory and in some areas designed to mislead". Another example is UNSCOM inspection No. 36. In this case, Iraq disposed of parts of assembled guidance components in spite of assurances to the team that they would remove only the names of the companies. On its general compliance, especially with Security Council

(Mrs. Al-Mulla, Kuwait)

resolution 715 (1991), Iraq seeks to ensure that implementation of the plan preceeds on the basis of its interpretation of its obligations rather than on the basis of Security Council resolutions and the plan adopted by the Council. In its report of 19 October 1992, the Special Commission states that it

> "remains constrained from going beyond preparatory work into full-scale monitoring and verification until it is clear that Iraq will comply with such monitoring on the Council's, not Iraq's, terms." (S/24661, para. 11)

Mr. LI (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The representative of Japan has just referred to the statement made by my delegation yesterday in which we expressed concern that Japan - a neighbour of ours - was storing more plutonium than it needed. Indeed, we have evidence pointing to the nuclearization of Japan. I shall be pleased to distribute that material upon request.

The representative of Japan raised the issue of a mutual inspections regime between the north and the south of Korea. The First Committee, however, is not the proper forum for discussion of this matter, which must be addressed by the parties themselves. In point of fact, the question of a north-south mutual inspections regime is under discussion at the joint nuclear-control committee of north and south. If both parties strive with sincerity the question can, I am sure, be solved. I hope Japan will not interfere with those efforts.

Mr. HASSAN (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): I do not intend to engage in polemics for this forum is not the right place for such an exchange. Also, I did not request the floor to exercise my right of reply to

(Mr. Hassan, Iraq)

some previous statements made by other delegations, in order to ensure the smooth work of the First Committee, despite the fact that those speakers made incorrect statements against my country, which are in line with the massive propaganda campaign mounted by the West against my country for vicious political reasons that are well known to all.

(Mr. Hassan, Iraq)

However, may I recall the following:

First, the reasons for instability in our region are the policies of dependence on foreign Powers and undeclared economic warfare by well-known regimes in the region.

Secondly, the lady who spoke really surprised me when she referred to Iraq's non-compliance with the provisions of section C of Security Council resolution 687 (1991). I thought that she was working as a lawyer on behalf of the Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Regrettably, she has failed as a lawyer because she spoke of Iraq's non-compliance at a time when the Chairman of the Special Commission, Ambassador Ekeus, is engaged in a discussion on the possibility of lifting sanctions on Iraq's oil exports, given the fact that Iraq has implemented the first and second parts of Security Council resolution 687 (1991). Therefore, when this lady spoke she expressed a sadistic desire to perpetuate the sanctions against the people of Iraq. The people of Iraq will never forget the position she has taken.

Thirdly, the allegation that Iraq intended to invade Saudi Arabia is one of history's enormous lies.

The open-handed financing of the propaganda machine will not suppress facts for ever. There is the saying that you can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all the time. The truth will be known regarding this great conspiracy against the people of Iraq and the stability of the region and everyone will receive his due.

(Mr. Hassan, Iraq)

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Kuwait, who wishes to speak a second time in exercise of the right of reply.

Miss AL-MULLA (Kuwait) (interpretation from Arabic): It is true I am not an attorney of the Special Commission or of the Internatinal Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). I defend only my country, Kuwait.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Saudi Arabia, who also wishes to speak a second time in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. AL-MIKHIM (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): I beg your indulgence, Mr. Chairman. As a matter of fact, I do not wish to reply. It is not in the nature of the policy of my country to engage in such polemics and useless talk, but I find myself compelled to do so concerning the point of the representative that he was reluctant to exercise his right of reply. I believe it is a right of all, and nobody requested that he should refrain from exercising his right. Concerning the question of dependence, he said that what happened in the region is the result of dependence on foreigners. I believe that the members of the Committee are prudent and discriminating enough to be able to distinguish between dependence on foreigners and compliance with international resolutions.

My final point is that I do not believe that the massing of the Iraqi troops on the borders of Saudi Arabia took place in a vacuum. This was the result of a premeditated plan that was aimed at the sovereignty of the Kingdom.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Iraq, who wishes to speak a second time in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. HASSAN (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): I apologize for asking to speak for a second time. I do not wish to tax the patience of this forum as the representative of Saudi Arabia did with polemics. We are the people that are farthest from this method, yet I should like to reaffirm that we had absolutely no intention of entering Saudi territory. This lie of great magnitude was used as a cover for the injection of foreign troops into the region. The objective of the injection of foreign troops was not the implementation of the resolutions of international legality as is claimed, but was the destruction of the infrastructures of Iraq and the destruction of every aspect of life and civilization in Iraq. This was borne out by facts, many of which will be made clear in the future.

I should also like to address another point. The lady spoke about a previous agreement between Iraq and a super-Power. This is a deliberate attempt to confuse the issue. There used to be a treaty on cooperation and friendship between Iraq and the Soviet Union, which is totally different from the actual presence of foreign troops on Arab territories.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.